



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3102

June 25, 2010

Colonel James Baunchalk
Commander, William Beaumont Army Medical Center
5005 North Piedras Street
El Paso, TX 79920

Dear Colonel Baunchalk:

Thank you for your response to my letter of June 15 requesting information on the care of traumatic brain injury (TBI) patients at Fort Bliss, and thank you for agreeing to take the time to meet with me this Sunday, June 27 to discuss Fort Bliss's and the military's care of TBI patients. I look forward to our discussion, during which I would like to further explore some of your responses, including the following.

- In response to my question about the military's approach to TBI care compared to care outside the military, you stated that as a level 2 DOD facility for TBI, Fort Bliss only manages care for mild and moderate TBI and that more severe cases are referred to other programs. You additionally state the scope of practice and care that members of your TBI team provide is consistent with the care delivered by professionals in a civilian medical setting. In our meeting, I would like to further examine how the *overall* quality of TBI care at Fort Bliss serves our soldiers compared to what they may have access to in civilian medicine. The medical professionals at Fort Bliss are, I am sure, dedicated to their work. However, I would like to ensure that the system of TBI care, in general, adequately addresses the needs of our service members and is adequately resourced.
- In response to my question about Building 805, you stated that the building was constructed for the purpose of conducting initial screening evaluation and was located next to the Deployment Readiness Center to increase the efficiency of screening. You say delays have not impacted care because the facility is replacing current facilities, and that a contract installing telecommunications infrastructure was awarded on June 17 with an estimated work completion date of June 25. When will the facility open, and how will its operation improve screening and care?
- In response to my question about the challenges of providing the highest level of TBI care, you only responded by saying that the primary challenge has been recruiting and retaining highly qualified medical professionals. TBI is one of the signature wounds of our wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and some have estimated that almost 20 percent of service members experience traumatic brain injuries. The challenges in comprehensively

DISTRICT OFFICES:

200 EAST BROADWAY, SUITE 200
HOBBS, NM 88240
PHONE: (575) 393-0510
FAX: (575) 393-0026

3445 LAMBROS LOOP NE
LOS LUNAS, NM 87031
PHONE: (505) 865-7802
FAX: (505) 865-7844

135 WEST GRIGGS AVENUE
LAS CRUCES, NM 88001
PHONE: (575) 522-3908
FAX: (575) 523-8799

102 EAST 4TH STREET
ROSWELL, NM 88201
PHONE: (575) 622-4178
FAX: (575) 622-4583

111 SCHOOL OF MINES ROAD
SOCORRO, NM 87801
PHONE: (575) 835-8719
FAX: (575) 835-8931

TOLL FREE: 1-888-9TEAGUE

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

addressing TBI are enormous. I am sure that you face other significant challenges in providing TBI care than the recruitment of medical professionals, and I look forward to discussing this. Additionally, I look forward to examining whether or not Fort Bliss has an adequate number of medical professionals to identify and treat the cases of TBI for which it is responsible.

Thank you for your service and your cooperation in ensuring the highest quality of care for TBI patients in the Armed Services. I look forward to meeting with you on Sunday.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Harry Teague". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "H" and "T".

Harry Teague
Member of Congress